

Message Text

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51

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

SAM-01 IO-14 DPW-01 AID-20 OMB-01 CU-04 EB-11 DRC-01

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R 131112Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7686

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL UDORN

USLO PEKING

USMISSION USUN

SECDEF

DIA

USIA WASHDC

CINCPAC

CINCUSARPAC

CINCPACAF

CDR USSAG NKP

CDR 13 AF ADVON UDORN

USDAO SAIGON

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COMUSMACTHAI

DODSPECREP BANKGOK
DODSPECREP NKP
354 TFW KORAT
CHSPECAC TS BANGKOK
CDR JCRC NKP
7 ACCS KORAT
432 TFW UDORN
8 TFW UBON
56 SOW NKP
388 TFW KORAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 VIENTIANE 1215

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD; 13 AF ADVON, 432 TFW, 56 SOW,
388 TFW, 354 TFW AND 88 TFW FOR DO/DI; MACTHAI FOR J-2
AND PAO.

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PGOV, PFOR, PINT, ECON, LA
SUBJECT: LAO WEEKLY SITREP - FEBRUARY 13

BEGIN SUMMARY: PROGRESS ON NEUTRALIZATION OF VIENTIANE
AND LUANG PRABANG GAVE RISE TO OPTIMISTIC STATEMENTS
BY BOTH SOUVANNA AND SOUPHANOUVONG THAT NEW GOVERNMENT
(PGNU) WILL BE FORMED, OR AT LEAST NAMED, SOON. SOUVANNA
IS AIMING FOR FEBRUARY 21, FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF SIGNING
OF VIENTIANE ACCORDS. STUDENT TURMOIL IN LAOS HAS
LARGELY ENDED, AND, FOR FIRST TIME SINCE DECLARATION
OF CEASEFIRE, KINGDOM EXPERIENCED NO MILITARY INCIDENTS
DURING SEVEN-DAY REPORTING PERIOD. ECONOMIC SITUATION
HAS REMAINED BASICALLY STABLE, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS A
SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN DEMAND FOR FOREIGN EXCHANGE,
REFLECTING PERHAPS SOME NERVOUSNESS VIS-A-VIS IMPENDING
FORMATION OF PGNU. END SUMMARY

I. IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENT

1. JOINT CENTRAL COMMISSION DEVELOPMENTS

AT THE 12TH PLENARY SESSION OF THE JCCIA, THE
RLG AND LPF CONTINUED TO MOVE AHEAD SMARTLY IN PREPARING
FOR NEUTRALIZATION OF TWIN CAPITALS BY SIGNING "REGULA-
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TIONS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF VIENTIANE AND LUANG
PRABANG" AND "REGULATIONS FOR THE JOINT NATIONAL POLICE
FORCES IN VIENTIANE AND LUANG PRABANG." LAO NATIONAL
POLICE TOOK THE FIRST STEPS TOWARD EFFECTING TURNOVER
OF URBAN POLICE FUNCTIONS TO JOINT POLICE FORCES (JPFS).
AT SPECIAL JCCIA CEREMONIES FEBRUARY 9 IN VIENTIANE
AND FEBRUARY 11 IN LUANG PRABANG, THE JCCIA CONFERRED
"RIGHT AND AUTHORITY" UPON CITY ADMINISTRATIVE CHIEFS

AND JPF COMMANDERS TO IMPLEMENT VARIOUS AGREEMENTS FOR
NEUTRALIZATION OF THE TWIN CAPITALS. IMPLICATION OF
CEREMONIES IS THAT LPF ACCEPTS INCUMBENT OFFICIALS AS
"NEUTRAL, DEMOCRATIC, AND PEACE-LOVING PERSONALITIES"
WITHIN MEANING OF ARTICLE 10 OF PROTOCOL.

ON FEBRUARY 11, THE PREFECT, DISTRICT CHIEFS OF
VIENTIANE, AND JPF REPRESENTATIVES HELD LENGTHY DIS-
CUSSIONS ON PROCEDURES FOR NEUTRALIZING VIENTIANE. MORE-
OVER, THE COMMAND STAFFS OF THE TWO SIDES' PROTECTIVE
MILITARY FORCES (PMFS) AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JCCIA
NEUTRALIZATION SUBCOMMITTEE MET UNOFFICIALLY FEBRUARY
5 AND, ON FEBRUARY 8, THE SUBCOMMITTEE HELD ITS FIRST
PLENARY SESSION AT THE PRESIDENCE DU CONSEIL TO DISCUSS
ITS WORKING PROCEDURES.

2. RLG ACTIVITIES

DURING HIS MEETING WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY
INGERSOLL, FEBRUARY 6, PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA VOICED
CONFIDENCE THAT NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD BE NAMED BY FEBRUARY
21. HOWEVER, HE SUBSEQUENTLY REPORTED TO DCM THAT HE
FACES PROCEDURAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEM SINCE KING
INSISTS CONSTITUTIONAL FORMS BE RESPECTED, WHILE LPF
OPPOSES SUBMITTING NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT TO NATIONAL

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 VIENTIANE 1215

ASSEMBLY FOR APPROVAL. IT IS APPARENT, HOWEVER, THAT SOUVANNA IS DETERMINED TO USE FEBRUARY 21 ANNIVERSARY OF SIGNING OF VIENTIANE ACCORDS AS DEADLINE TO APPLY PRESSURE ON ALL LAO ELEMENTS TO FORM, OR AT LEAST NAME, THE NEW GOVERNMENT BY THAT DATE.

ON FEBRUARY 13, THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DECIDED TO INVITE THE PRIME MINISTER TO APPEAR BEFORE IT TO RECEIVE CLARIFICATION ON THE PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE JPF S AND PMF S AS WELL AS IN THE JOINT ADMINISTRATION OF LUANG PRABANG AND

VIENTIANE. NO DATE HAS BEEN SET FOR SUCH A MEETING, ALTHOUGH SOUVANNA MAY TRY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO MUSTER SUPPORT OF ASSEMBLY LEADERSHIP FOR MEETING HIS FEBRUARY 21 DEADLINE.

3. LPF ACTIVITIES

IN AN INTERVIEW GRANTED TO AN EAST BERLIN JOURNALIST, SOUPHANOUVONG EXPRESSED OPTIMISM ABOUT NEW GOVERNMENT BEING FORMED "SOON." HE NOTED WEEKS' DEVELOPMENTS, CITED ABOVE, AS FULLFILLING THE ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR THE FORMATION OF THE PGNU AND JOINT NATIONAL POLITICAL COUNCIL.

PHOUN SIPRASEUTH, BILLED IN LPF PROPAGANDA AS PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG'S "PLEIPOTENTIARY REPRESENTATIVE,"
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RETURNED TO VIENTIANE FEBRUARY 9 AND PRESENTED A NEW LETTER FROM SOUPHANOUVONG TO SOUVANNA ON THE 10TH. PHOUN REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED FORMATION OF PGNU AND NEUTRALIZATION OF VIENTIANE AND LUANG PRABANG WITH SOUVANNA FOR AN HOUR ON FEBRUARY 11. PHOUN HAS NOT PRESENTED LIST OF PROSPECTIVE LPF CABINET MINISTERS TO PRIME MINISTER.

ON FEBRUARY 9, THE LPF FORMALLY PROTESTED TO THE RLG ABOUT A SHOOTING INCIDENT WHICH TOOK PLACE AT ONE OF ITS COMPOUNDS IN VIENTIANE DURING EVENING OF FEBRUARY 8. ALTHOUGH NO ONE WAS INJURED, THE LPF WARNED THAT NEXT TIME LPF TROOPS WILL DEFEND THEMSELVES.

DURING BUDDHIST HOLIDAY FEBRUARY 7, THE HEAD OF THE LPF DELEGATION, SOTH PHETRASY, AND HIS DEPUTY, MAHAKOU SOUVANNAMETHI, PARTICIPATED IN TRADITIONAL CEREMONIES AT WAT ONG TU IN VIENTIANE.

ACCORDING TO THE PATHET LAO NEWS AGENCY, A DELEGATION OF THE LAO PEACE COMMITTEE LEFT FEBRUARY 5 FOR SOFIA TO ATTEND THE WORLD PEACE CONFERENCE.

4. OTHER

FRENCH SOURCES ANNOUNCED THAT THE FRENCH MILITARY MISSION IS PLANNING TO INCREASE ITS PERSONNEL FROM 89 TO 120 TO BEEF UP "CORPS OF INSTRUCTORS FOR LAO TROOPS AS AMERICAN MILITARY ADVISORS PROGRESSIVELY DEPART."

THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR AND HIS WIFE, PLUS ENTOURAGE, VISITED SAM NEUA FEBRUARY 12-13. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR IS ALSO EXPECTED TO VISIT SAM NEUA SOON.

PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA HAS APPROVED ADDITIONAL RESUPPLY FLIGHTS, CARRYING FOOD, MEDICINES, PERSONAL EFFECTS, AUTO PARTS, ETC., TO LPF ELEMENTS IN BOTH LUANG PRABANG AND VIENTIANE. SIX CHINESE FLIGHTS PER WEEK TO LUANG PRABANG ON MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY HAVE BEEN AUTHORIZED, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 13. RUSSIAN FLIGHTS TO VIENTIANE (USING AN-26 S) HAVE ALSO BEEN AUTHORIZED, BUT SCHEDULE HAS YET TO BE FORMALLY APPROVED.
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II. STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS

STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN SAVANNAKHET AND SITHANDONE PROVINCES CALMED DURING THE WEEK PRIMARILY AS A RESULT OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRIME MINISTER MEETING WITH THE STUDENTS. HOWEVER, NEW, BUT RELATIVELY MINOR, DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE BROKEN OUT IN BAN HOUEI SAI. SOUVANNA HAS MADE IT CLEAR TO THE STUDENTS IN VIENTIANE AND LUANG PRABANG THAT HE DOES NOT WANT THE DELICATE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THOSE TWO CITIES TO BE UPSET BY DEMONSTRATIONS. FOR THE MOMENT, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS APPEAR TO HAVE JUST ABOUT RUN THEIR COURSE, ALTHOUGH THE LAO STUDENTS ARE, FOR FIRST TIME, BEGINNING TO DEVELOP AN AWARENESS OF THEIR POLITICAL MUSCLE.

III. SECURITY SITUATION

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE DECLARATION OF THE LAOS CEASEFIRE IN FEBRUARY 1973, THERE WERE NO MILITARY INCIDENTS REPORTED IN THE KINGDOM DURING THE PERIOD FEBRUARY 6-13. AT THE SAME TIME, THE LOCAL PRESS IS PLAYING UP ALLEGED NORTH VIETNAMESE INVOLVEMENT IN ATTACKS IN THE HIN BOUN SECTOR NORTH OF THAKHEK WHICH OCCURRED LAST WEEK.

IV. ECONOMIC SITUATION

USAID COST-OF-LIVING INDEX REMAINED ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED LAST WEEK. POL SUPPLIES ARE ARRIVING AT 1973 LEVELS AND RESTRICTIONS ON AMOUNT OF MOGAS PER SALE ARE NO LONGER ENFORCED.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE DEMAND INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY SINCE END OF LAST WEEK, REFLECTING PERHAPS SOME NERVOUSNESS IN CONNECTION WITH THE IMPENDING FORMATION OF PGNU.
WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, GOVERNMENT REFORM, ARMISTICE, CABINET, NOMINATION, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, POLITICAL SITUATION, NEUTRALIZATION, MEETINGS, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974VIENTI01215
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740234/aaaabfww.tel
Line Count: 330
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: ECTING PERHAPS SOME NERVOUSNESS VIS-, A-VIS IMPENDING
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <11 JUN 2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LAO WEEKLY SITREP - FEBRUARY 13 BEGIN SUMMARY: PROGRESS ON NEUTRALIZATION OF VIENTIANE
TAGS: MOPS, PGOV, PFOR, PINT, ECON, LA, JCCIA, LPF
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005